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Senate

The Senate met at 9:45 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable DEAN HELLER, a Senator from the State of Nevada.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Our Father in Heaven, thank You for the light of Your truth that provides a lamp for our feet and illumination for our paths.

Give strength to our Senators. Provide them with courage to live a life that honors You, faith to believe that all things are possible, and reverence that brings wisdom. Give them the grace to receive with gratitude the many blessings You richly bestow upon them daily, empowering them to serve You with active zeal and humble confidence. May they wait with patient expectation for the triumphant and amazing unfolding of Your powerful providence.

We pray in Your mighty Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, June 21, 2018.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable DEAN HELLER, a Senator from the State of Nevada, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

Mr. HELLER thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

ENERGY AND WATER, LEGISLATIVE BRANCH, AND MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2019

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 5895, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 5895) making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Shelby amendment No. 2910, in the nature of a substitute.

Alexander amendment No. 2911 (to amendment No. 2910), to make a technical correction.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH). The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, this week, we have been considering a regular appropriations package and voting on amendments.

Many of us have wanted this return to regular order in appropriations for quite some time. It didn't happen over-

night. We owe thanks to Chairman SHELBY and Ranking Member LEAHY for the transparent, bipartisan process that has produced this bill. Thanks to the leadership of our colleagues at the subcommittee level, more bills will be on their way to the floor for prompt consideration.

The package before us today will cross three important items off the Senate's appropriations to-do list: funding for Energy and Water, for Military Construction and the VA, and for the Legislative Branch.

As I have discussed on the floor this week, the first set of funding measures attend to a number of major national priorities. The Energy and Water title allocates critical resources for the safety, security, and readiness of our Nation's nuclear arsenal. It delivers record funding for cutting-edge scientific research, and it directs support for mitigating flood damage, protecting shorelines, and upkeep for America's inland waterways, like those that support 13,000 jobs in my home State alone.

The Military Construction and VA title offers targeted resources to causes that are near and dear to servicemembers and their families: upgrades to military housing and school systems, improvements to training facilities, reinforcement of overseas partnerships and alliances, and maintenance of veterans' healthcare facilities.

There is so much important work contained in this package, and it is just the first step in this year's regular appropriations process.

With additional cooperation today, we will be able to continue processing amendments on both sides of the aisle and complete work on these bills.

TAX REFORM

Now, Madam President, on another matter, yesterday marked 6 months since Congress passed our overhaul of America's Tax Code. Tomorrow is 6 months since the President signed it into law.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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